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August 28, 1996

The Honorable K. Maurice Johannessen
Senator, Fourth District
State Capitol, Room 5087
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Senator Johannessen:

I appreciate receiving a copy of the July 25 letter you sent to Secretary Wheeler expressing your concerns about the CALFED Bay Delta Program.

I understand that you will be meeting with the Secretary and Dave Kennedy in the near future to discuss these concerns. I wanted to assure you that we are aware of your concerns which have been very well expressed by many involved citizens who have been active in our process.

You raise several important issues in your letter to Secretary Wheeler which I would like to briefly address. First, you raise the issue that the CALFED Bay-Delta Program has not made Area of Origin protections an integral part of the discussion. Our analysis of the benefits and impacts of the three alternative solutions for Bay-Delta issues will examine any impacts of the proposed alternatives upon Area of Origin and other California water right laws. Modifying California water law in order to strengthen or expand Area of Origin protections is, however, beyond the scope of the CALFED Program. We do not intend to suggest any changes to current interpretation of California water law as part of this Program as we believe this to be clearly within the jurisdiction of the State Legislature and the State Water Resources Control Board.

You are concerned that additional storage in the Sacramento Valley does not appear to be a priority in the discussions. Currently, there are no priorities for the location of any additional storage to be developed as part of the alternatives. We are studying additional storage in each of the three alternatives to determine the feasibility and cost effectiveness. Additional storage in Sacramento Valley is being evaluated in the range of up to 3 million acre feet.

CALFED Agencies

California

The Resources Agency
Department of Fish and Game
Department of Water Resources
California Environmental Protection Agency
State Water Resources Control Board

Federal

Environmental Protection Agency
Department of the Interior
Fish and Wildlife Service
Bureau of Reclamation
Department of Commerce
National Marine Fisheries Service

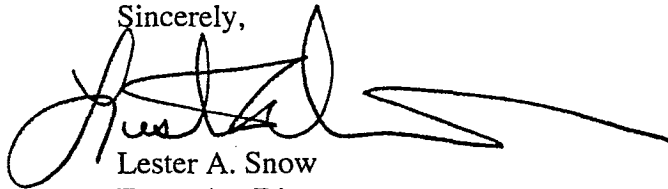
The Honorable K. Maurice Johannessen
August 28, 1996
Page 2

Regarding fish screen work which would be done as part of the Program, we are currently in the process of working to obtain a consolidated and coordinated approach among the CALFED agencies. Our objective is to achieve a coordinated set of technical standards for screening throughout the Bay-Delta system. Issues concerning assurances to landowners regarding screening and the longevity of the technical recommendations will need to be addressed prior to the initial implementation of a preferred alternative.

Finally, regarding our proposed application of land retirement as part of the Program, let me clarify our current thinking. After further consideration of this important issue, the Program intends to continue to consider permanent land retirement as a potential measure to improve water quality, but not as a direct tool in the Water Use Efficiency Program. In this context, the Program will consider land retirement in areas with drainage management problems on the west side of the San Joaquin which are tributary to the Delta. The Program recognizes several strategies are available to manage agricultural drainage from these lands, so there may be alternatives to land retirement. Further refinement will be necessary to decide the range of acreage considered for retirement to improve water quality. This approach will also be coordinated with other components of the CALFED alternatives that address water supply, including storage and conveyance.

I am available to discuss these concerns with you as well any time you may find it convenient.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lester A. Snow', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Lester A. Snow
Executive Director